A LETTER

From the

ASSEMBLY of DIVINES

IN

ENGLAND,

TO THE

GENERALL ASSEMBLY

IN

SCOTLAND.

Together with the Answer of the Generall Assembly of *Scotland*, *THEREUNTO*.

Ordered by the House of Commons, that these two Letters be Printed and published.

Hen. Elsyn. *Cler. P. D. Com.*

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A

LETTER

FROM THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

Together with the Answer of

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY of the Church of SCOTLAND.

Right Reverend and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

WE the Assembly of Divines and others, called, and now sitting by Authority of both Houses of Parliament, to be consulted by them in matters of Religion, have received from the Honourable House of Commons a speciall Order (dated the third of this instant *August*) recommending it to Us *to write a Letter to the Generall Assembly of the Church of* Scotland, *taking notice of the pious and good expressions to this Church and State, testified in the late Answer of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of* Scotland, *from their meeting at* Edinb. *the* 17. *of* July, 1643. *and further to desire them to possesse the people of that Kingdome with our condition, and to encourage them to our assistance in this Cause of Religion.* And having, with that Order, received and read the said Answer directed *To the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of* England, we cannot sufficiently expresse the great content and comfort unto which it hath raised us in the midst of the sad and calamitous condition under which we lie.

It is no ſmall refreſhing to our mourning ſpirits to finde that yet our God hath not left us wholly comfortleſſe, nor caſt us ſo farre out of his ſight, as having made us ſicke with ſmiting, that ſhould be verified of us, Lover and Friend haſt thou put farre from us; and, that no man ſhould turne aſide to aske how we doe: but that we finde ſo many of the Churches of Chriſt, and above them all our deareſt Brethren of *Scotland*, ſo farre to take to heart our extremities, as to ſit in the duſt with us, and ſo to look upon our adverſities as being themſelves alſo in the body.

And as we cannot render thanks ſufficient unto our God for remembring ſuch mercy in the midſt of ſo much wrath, ſo we imbrace with all cheartulneſſe this opportunity of thankfull acknowledgment of the great debt which your love doth continually lay upon not us alone, but upon this whole Kingdome, in the free and full expreſſions of your care, piety, and zeale, and of like affections of that whole Nation, to aſſiſt and concurre with the Parliament here, by all good and lawfull meanes for ſetling of Religion in godly unity and uniformity throughout al his Majeſties Dominions, againſt all the Deſignes, power, and malice of bloudy Papiſts, and the Prelaticall Faction, with all their Malignant adherents, the common enemies of Reformation, Truth, and Peace.

We are likewiſe much ingaged to the great vigilancie & travailes of the Honorable Convention of the Eſtates of *Scotland*, in contributing their brotherly advice, and for their readineſſe to give aſſiſtance for recovering and ſetling the Peace of this Kingdome, againſt the devices, power, and practiſes of the enemies of Religion and the publike good, whereof ſome hints are given in that Anſwer, and of which, we doubt not, but the Honourable Houſes of Parliament will be ſo ſenſible, as to give ſuch a returne as becomes them. For they better knowing than we do, the depth of the evils under which this Nation now groaneth, and the further dangers imminent, will be more able to value and improve the great affection and wiſdome of their Brethren in points of ſo high and generall concernment for the ſafety and

glory

glory of the Kings Majesty and of all his Kingdomes, and are more fit to take notice of advices of that kind, in reference to the Civill State, which therefore we wholly leave with them.

But as for the many prudent, pious and seasonable admonitions which concerne our Assembly, The good Lord reward (for we cannot) seven fold into your bosomes all the good which you have laboured to procure unto the House of our God. And blessed be his Name which hath put such a thing as this into the hearts of our Parliament to clense the House of the Lord of all the uncleanesse that is in it by impure Doctrine, Worship, or Discipline.

Nor can we in the depth of all our sufferings and sorrowes with-hold our hearts from rejoycing in the wonderfull goodnes of God toward this Kingdom, in that he hath let us see the gracious fruit of your effectuall prayers and teares, as well as of our owne endeavours this way, in bringing together this Assembly, although in a very troublous time, whereby we may have better opportunity more fully to powre out our soul-s joyntly and together to our God for healing of this now miserable Church and Nation; to consider throughly for what more especially the Land mourneth, and how we may be most usefull to our Great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in contributing somewhat to the vindicating of his pretious Truth, many wayes corrupted through the craft of men that have laine in waite to deceive; in the seeking out of a right way of worshiping our God according to his owne heart; in promoting the power of godlinesse in the hearts and lives of all our people; and in laying forth such a Discipline as may be most agreeable to Gods holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of this Church at home, and neerer agreement with the Church of *Scotland* (highly honoured by us) and other the best Reformed Churches abroad, that so, to the utmost of our power, we may exalt him that is the onely Lord over the Church (his owne House) in all his Offices, and present this Church as a chast Virgin unto Christ.

It is a timely and savory Prayer which you have put up at the

Throne of Grace touching the due managing of the proceedings in this Assembly, and that with streight intentions we may all seeke the truth in every thing, which, by the blessing of God upon our labours, must needs produce all those blessings which your worthy Commissioners mention. And now, for your comfort, as well as our incouragement, we desire you to take notice of the gracious Answer of the God that heareth prayer, unto your fervent cries. For, beside our owne particular addresses and secret vowes to our God to be faithfull (with disdaine of all baits of avarice and ambition) It hath pleased the Divine Providence so to direct both the Honourable Houses of Parl. to take care of preventing all obliquity in our proceedings, and to stop the mouths of all that watch for their and our haltings, and are apt malitiously to traduce both (as if we were restrained by them in our Votes and Resolutions, to be bound up to the sense of others, and to carry on private Designes in a servile way) that the Houses have tendred to us, & we have all most readily taken a solemne and serious Protestation in the presence of Almighty God, to maintain nothing in this Assembly touching Doctrine, but what we are perswaded in our consciences to be the Truth, nor in matters of Discipline, but what we conceive to conduce most to the Glory of God, and to the good and peace of his Church; which doth not onely secure the members against fettering of their judgements or Votes, but ingage them to the use of all freedome becomming the integrity of Conscience, the weight of the Cause, and the gravity and honour of such an Assembly.

It is likewise a great consolation that our God hath put it into your hearts to designe some godly and learned Brethren to put in their sickles with us into this Harvest, which is so great, and requires so many labourers; for which as we heartily return our thanks, so we earnestly pray the Lord of the Harvest to open a way to their timely comming hither, and doe assure them of all testimonies of respect, love, and the right hand of fellowship, who shall undertake a journey so tedious, and now so perilous, to joyne with us in the worke, when it shall please the Honourab'

nourable Houſes of Parliament to invite them thereunto.

It remaines that we ſhould now ſpread before you our calamities, dangers, and fears of further evils, not only drawing toward us, but threatning even you alſo, and crave your compaſſionate aides in all wayes becomming the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt. But your Commiſſioners have ſo fully declared your certain knowledge and deep ſenſe of them, that they have left us no roome for inlarging our ſelves in this particular to Brethren ſo full of bowels and zeale: and they have ſufficiently intimated unto the Honorable Houſes, that you are well aware how often the common enemies of both Kingdoms have conſulted together with one conſent to cut off both the one and the other from being a Nation: and that the Tabernacles of *Edom* and the *Iſhmaelites*, of *Moab* and the *Hagarens*, *Gebal*, *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, the curſed Papiſts, and their implacable and bloudy Abettors here doe ſtill retaine the ſame malice, and carry on the ſame Deſigne againſt Religion and perfect Reformation, even in your Kingdom happily reſcued from their former tyrannies, as well as in this of ſcorched *England* now in the furnace: onely they have varied the Scene, powring out all their fury upon us at the preſent, that ſo having once trodden us under as mire in the ſtreets, they may afterward more eaſily (which God avert) ſet their proud and impure feet upon your necks alſo. Wherfore with the good leave & favor of the Honorable Houſes of Parl. we ſhall now ſpare the further exciting of you to that which we doubt not of, your forwardneſſe to promote with all your might, namely the poſſeſſing the good people of that Kingdome (of whoſe willing mind and readineſſe you have already given ample teſtimony) touching our condition, and to encourage them to our aſſiſtance in this Cauſe of Religion.

And now, remembring without ceaſing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all due acknowledgements of the pretious effects of your prayers: we moſt humbly and earneſtly deſire that the ſame breathings of the Spirit in you may ſtill continue, and (if poſſible) more frequently and fervently aſcend to your God and our God, not only for removall of the outward preſſures, and the viſitation

alſo

of the ſword that hath already learnt to eat much of our fleſh, but alſo for the ſpeciall aſſiſtance and protection of the Father of Lights in this great Work unto which we are called, and wherein we already find many and potent adverſaries: That ſeeing the Plummet is now in the hands of our *Zerubbabels*, all mountaines may be plains, and they may bring forth the top-ſtone of the Lords Houſe with ſhoutings, crying Grace, Grace, unto it; and that how weak and contemptible builders ſoever we be, the Lord would enable us ſo to build with them, that none may have cauſe to deſpiſe the day of our ſmall beginnings, nor to ſtop our progreſſe in the work which he hath given us to doe. And as for us, who cannot but take notice of the extraordinary imployments unto which you are called in your Great Aſſembly, now alſo ſitting; God forbid that we ſhould ſin againſt the Lord in ceaſing to pray for you, that the Lord may inable you to be wiſe Maſter-builders, preſerve your peace alwayes, by all meanes, and make you ſtedfaſt, unmovable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, and to the further benefit and comfort of the whole Church of God, but more eſpecially of this our afflicted Ark now wafted into the midſt of a ſea of miſeries, and toſſed with tempeſts, untill our wiſe and gracious God, by the furtherance of your prayers and brotherly endeavours, ſhall cauſe it to reſt upon the mountains of *Ararat*, which may take away our fears as well as put an end to our preſent ſufferings, and give you to rejoyce with us, who now mourne for us.

Subſcribed by your moſt loving Brethren, highly priſing the graces of God in you, and that are your ſervants for Jeſus ſake, in the name of this whole Aſſembly,

Weſtminſter, *Aug.* 4. 1643.

William Twiſſe *Prolocutor*.
John White *Aſſeſſor*.
Cornelius Burges *Aſſeſſor*.
Henry Robrough *Scribe*.
Adoniram Byfeild *Scribe*.
} *of the Aſſembly.*

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND THE ASSEMBLY of DIVINES and others of the Church of ENGLAND.

Right Reverend and dearely beloved,

AS the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our hearty desire to God is, that your consolations may much more abound by Christ. The perusing of your Letter produced in every one of us such a mixture of affections, as were at the laying of the foundation of the second Temple, where there was heard both shouting for joy, and weeping aloud; we rejoyced that Christ our Lord had at last in that Land Created a new thing in calling together, not as of before a prelaticall Con-

vocation to be taske-masters over the people of the Lord, but an Assembly of godly Divines, minding the things of the Lord, whose hearts are set to purge the defiled house of God in that Land; yet this our joy was not a little allayed, by the consideration of the sad and deplorable condition of that Kingdome, where the high provocations of so many yeeres, the hellish plots of so many enemies in a nick of time have brought in an inundation of overflowing calamities: we know you are patiently bearing the indignation of the Lord, because you have sinned against him, till he throughly plead your cause and disquiet the Inhabitants of *Babylon*, who now laugh amongst themselves while you are fed with the bread of teares, and get teares to drinke in great measure, being on the mountaines, like the doves of the valleyes, all of you mourning every one for his iniquity.

It is now more nor evident to all the Kirks of Christ, with what implacable fury and hellish rage the bloud-thirsty Papists, as *Babylon* without, and the Prelaticail faction, the children of *Edom*, within, having adjoyned to themselves many malignant adherents of time-serving Atheists, haters of holinesse, rejecters of the yoake of Christ (to whom the morning light of Reformation, is as the shadow of death) have begunne to swallow up the inheritance of the Lord, And are not easily satisfied in making deepe

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and long furrowes on your backes. Wee cannot say that the loudneſſe of your cry ſurpaſſeth the heavineſſe of your ſtroke, but though the Lord hath delivered the men, every one into his neighbours hand, and into the hand of his King, and they have ſmitten the Land, yet the rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous, this cloud ſhall ſpeedily paſſe away, and a faire ſun-ſhine ſhall appeare.

As for us, though your extreame Calamity did not threaten the ruine of our religion, peace, and liberties, as it doth moſt evidently, wee would hate our ſelves if we did not find our hearts within us melting with Compaſſion over you, you are engraven on the table of our hearts to live and dye with you, we could deſire, that our heads were waters, and our eyes a fountaine of teares, that wee might weepe day and night for the ſlaine of the daughter of the Lords people: ſo calamitous a condition of any of the Kirks of Chriſt could not but be very grievous unto us, how much more ſhall we not ſtoope and fall downe in the duſt to imbrace our deareſt Brethren of *England*, to whom we are tyed in ſo neere and tender relations? when we were but creeping out of the deepe darkneſſe and bondage of Poperie, and were almoſt bruiſed with the fury of forraigne invaders, joyned with inteſtine enemies, pretending the name and warrant of authority (as now your oppreſſors doe) then did the Lord

by your Fathers ſend us ſeaſonable aſſiſtance againſt that intended and begun bondage, both of ſoule and body, the repayment of which debt, the Divine providence ſeemeth now to require at our hands; and whereas of late, through our ſecurity we had falne in a wofull relapſe, and were compaſſed about with dreadfull dangers on all hands, while we aymed at the recovery of our former purity and liberty, then wee wanted not the large ſupply of your fervent prayers, and other Brotherly aſſiſtance of that Nation, whileſt thoſe who are now your malignant enemies would have ſwallowed us up.

Theſe ſtraight bonds of your ancient and late love do ſo poſſeſſe our hearts, that when the motions of the Commiſsioners of the honourable Houſes of Parliament, and your Letters did challenge our advice and aid for defence of Religion, and advancement of Reformation, our ſmoaking deſires for a more ſtrict union and uniformity in Religion betwixt both the Nations, did breake forth into a vehement flame, in ſuch ſort, as when a draught of a League and Covenant betwixt both Kingdomes for defence of Religion, &c. was read in open audience, it was ſo unanimouſly and heartily imbraced, with ſuch a torrent of moſt affectionate expreſsions, as none but eye or eare witneſſes can conceive, whereof the two Reverend Divines ſent from you to us, being then preſent, no doubt

doubt will give you an account. Neither was it so only with us, but also the honourable Convention of Estates here, with the like harmony of affectionate expressions, did entertaine the same, and will, no doubt, be reall and constant in prosecuting the Contents of this Covenant: when wee in our straights fled to the Lord, and entred in covenant with him, he owned us and our Cause, rebuked & dissipated our enemies; and hitherto hath helped us, and blessed our enterprises with successe from Heaven, notwithstanding our great weaknesse and unworthinesse, wee trust in the Lord, that as once it was prophesied of *Israel* & *Judah*, so shall *Scotland* and *England* become one sticke in the hand of the *Lord*; they shall ask the way to *Sion*, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, let us joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, that shall not be forgotten, and so shall it come to passe, that the Lords *Jerusalem* in this Island shall be a cup of trembling, and a burthensome stone to all their enemies round about, though now it be the time of *Jacobs* trouble, the Lord will deliver him out of it.

Reverend and deare brethren, wee conceive your case, and of all the faithfull in that Land, to be no other then of a woman crying, travelling in birth, and pained till she be delivered; the great *Red Dragon* (under whose Standard the sonnes of *Belial* are fighting) is your arch-enemie; this cannot but be a time of feare

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and ſorrow, but when the male childe ſhall be brought forth, the paine ſhall ceaſe, and the ſorrow ſhall be forgotten.

Wee are very confident in the Lord, that you will be faithfull to Ieſus Chriſt, in the Worke committed to you by him, exalting him in all his Ordinances, and taking neither Foundation, Corner-ſtone, nor any part of the rubbiſh of *Babel*, to build the City that is called, *The Lord is there*, but meaſurring all with the golden reed of the Sanctuary, you may more cloſely be united to the beſt reformed Kirks which have forſaken *Babylon* in Doctrine, Worſhip and Government, that you may grow up in him in all things, which is the Head, even Chriſt.

And now, Reverend and deare Brethren, though we know that you abound in all gifts and graces, the Spirit of Ieſus Chriſt being plentifully powred out on you, yet according to your deſire, and the motion made by the Commiſsioners of the honourable Houſes of the Parliament, to teſtifie our hearty ſympathy with you in the Work of the Lord, we have nominated and elected ſome godly and learned of this Church to repaire to your Aſſembly; we doubt nothing of your hearty imbracing them in the Lord, and their diligent concurrence with you in advancing that great Worke; not onely the common danger we are under with you, but the conſcience of our dutie to

his

his ſuffering people, layeth bonds on us frequently to preſent you and that bleſſed Worke of Reformation in your hands, to the throne of Grace, that the God of all grace, who will call you into his eternall glory by Ieſus Chriſt, after that you have ſuffered a while, may make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you.

Edenburgh, the
19. of *Auguſt*. 1643.

Subſcribed in the name of the Generall Aſſembly of the Kirke of Scotland, *by the Clerke of the Aſſembly*,

A. Ihonſton, *Cler. Eccle.*

READ the 12. of *Sept*. 1643. in the Commons Houſe of Parliament, and ordered that the Letter ſent from the Aſſembly here, to the Aſſembly of Divines in *Scotland*, together with this Letter in anſwer thereunto, ſhall be forthwith printed and publiſhed; And that Mr. *Byfield* doe take care to ſee the ſame Printed accordingly.

Hen. Elſyng. Cler. P.D. Com.

FINIS.